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DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND AWARENESS RAISING IN BELGIUM

Are for-profit private actors and technical and vocational education underserved target groups?

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PULSE

KU LEUVEN HIVA

RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR WORK AND SOCIETY

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Abstract

Belgium is one of the main investors in development education and awareness raising (DEAR) in Europe. Previous research suggested that in the current DEAR activities provided by development NGOs, for-profit private actors and vocational and technical secondary education (VTSE) receive less attention. This study picks up where previous research left off: it puts on trial the hypothesis of these two reportedly underserved target groups, and explores if and why the current supply of DEAR fails to reach them. Firstly, the study does not find strong indications that the current DEAR supply is underserving VTSE. A large proportion of DEAR offered by Belgian NGOs targets secondary education, and there is no evidence that VTSE is excluded from accessing it. On the contrary, NGOs have increased their efforts to involve VTSE in their DEAR activities. The bigger question however seems to be how much of this DEAR is actually developed for and truly adapted to VTSE audiences. Secondly, the study confirms that DEAR targeting for-profit private sector is scarce and often fails to connect with its audience. With relatively few bridges between the development NGOs and the private sector, interaction is hindered by image problems, mismatches between NGO and business attitudes as well as daily management practices and by a lack of knowledge of the other. The study discusses different initiatives that attempt to overcome these challenges. Finally, an issue raised for both target groups, is that target group specialisation in DEAR risks diverting the efforts from a truly 'tailored' approach that also respects the diversity within both of these groups.

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Preface

This discussion paper is based on research performed in the framework of PULSE, the Belgian Research Forum on Public Support for Development Cooperation. It is promoted by the Research Institute for Work and Society (HIVA-KU Leuven) in close collaboration with the Belgian Development Cooperation agency (DGD) and other research experts. The objectives of PULSE are to monitor the public support for global solidarity and development policy and to provide tools to make awareness raising activities in this domain more effective. To this end, PULSE has since 2008 been carrying out research in four domains: (1°) making a systematic inventory (barometer) of the public support for development cooperation within the Belgian society as well as within specific sectors (politics and the private sector in particular); (2°) contribute to a better regulation of supply and demand of awareness-raising projects; (3°) improve methods of monitoring and evaluation of the activities aimed at increasing public support; (4°) study the possibilities of effectively reaching the public through using conventional as well as digital media. For more information check the website (in Dutch): http://www.pulse-oplatform.com.

1 | Introduction

The Belgian DEAR-scene can be characterised by big government investments, a very diverse and complex landscape of actors and approaches, and a somewhat atypical use of terminology. A recent mapping (De Bruyn, 2012) throws some light on the main providers, their target groups, and their approaches. It also uncovers some possible tender spots and lacunas. One of the issues raised, is the possible 'underserving' of two important target groups: (1) for-profit private sector and (2) vocational and technical secondary education (VTSE). This paper reports on the follow-up research testing this finding and further contemplating whether and how current DEAR-practices can be better aligned with the needs and demands of these target groups. First the research scope and methodology will be discussed. In the third section DEAR targeting VTSE is further investigated. Section 4 elaborates on DEAR aimed at the for-profit private sector. In the concluding chapter possible ways forward are pointed out.

2 | Research scope and design

2.1 Terminology

'Global learning', 'global education', 'development education', 'global citizen's education', 'raising public support for development cooperation': there seems to be little consensus on the meaning, scope and appropriate use of these concepts (Daens, Van Ongevalle & De Bruyn, 2011, p. 5; Krause, 2010, p. 5-8). Striving for more conceptual clarity, Krause (2010) suggested a typology (see Figure 2.1) which distinguishes between four different understandings of development education that occur in the concepts and practice of the diverse actors: (1) development education as public relations for development aid (by many actors considered as an inappropriate approach); (2) development education as awareness raising, *i.e.* disseminating information about development issues; (3) development education as global education, *i.e.* aiming at changed behaviour and at enhancing action of the target group for global justice and sustainability; (4) development education as the development of life skills, *i.e.* focusing on the learning process and the enhancement of competencies needed for life in the complex and dynamic world society.

Figure 2.1 Recognised and unrecognised approaches to development education

	Public Relations	Awareness Raising	Global Education	Life Skills
	Not recognised as DE	Recognised as Development Education		
Thematic scope	development cooperation	wider development issues	global interdependency; North-South issues (environmental, economic, political, social)	local and global issues of social ethics in world society (beyond a North-South perspective)
Goal	public support	awareness	responsible action	fulfilling life, social change
Educative approach	"indoctrination"	information	participation; process awareness/experience => understanding/capacity building => action	support/offer; empowerment
Pedagogic thought	commercial	top-down	actor-centred, normative	constructivist, systemic
Target Group	object of PR	recipient of information	subject of a learning process in which normative objectives are given; activist	(dynamic) subject of a self-organised learning process in which results are open; agent of social change
Context	foreign aid	development policy	(recent) globalisation	local community & world society

Source Krause, 2010, p. 7

This paper focuses mainly on the two approaches labelled by Krause as 'global education' and 'awareness raising', and systematically uses the term 'development education and awareness raising (DEAR)'. This terminology is in line with a common practice at European level, as demonstrated by the European Consensus on Development set up in 2005 (Lappalainen, 2010). It has the additional merit that the explicit inclusion of 'awareness raising' emphasises its scope beyond the educational sector to other sectors such as, for example, the private sector. However, this terminology

may not mirror the current tendency towards 'global education' and 'global learning' as most appropriate terms, and it does also differ from common practice amongst Belgian DEAR-actors.

Belgian NGOs as well as government organisations in practice often label all activities aimed at a Belgian target audience as 'North activities' (in contrast to the 'South activities' taking place in developing countries). In parallel, Belgian academicians and policy makers may use the phrase 'raising public support for development cooperation' (cf. 'draagvlakversterking voor ontwikkelingssamenwerking') when referring to activities stimulating positive attitudes and behaviour towards development cooperation (De Bruyn & Van Ongevalle, 2013, p. 53). This phrasing has not entirely been adopted by development NGOs, who are not convinced that an unconditionally support for the official development cooperation policy is always appropriate and prefer a more critical stance. They therefore prefer to use the term 'development education', which in their interpretation is one component of 'global citizen's education' (together with other types of education). In consultation with the federal government, a common definition of development education was developed (see Box 1). Although the consensus term 'development education' differs from this paper's chosen term 'development education and awareness raising (DEAR)', the definition does describe accurately what in this paper is considered part of DEAR.

Box 1: consensus definition 'development education'

The definition of development education agreed by the joint consultation group of the Belgian Federal Ministry of Development Cooperation, the Belgian Technical Cooperation and NGO's states (Federale Overheidsdienst Buitenlandse Zaken, Buitenlandse Handel en Ontwikkelingssamenwerking, 2011, p. 2):

Development education forms part of global citizenship education. The general purpose of the latter is to contribute to a more just and solidary world based on democratic values. In development education the North-South relations are the focal point. In a context of interdependence between global challenges and the daily life of individuals and communities, development education starts off processes that aim to:

- promote global insight into international development issues and stimulate critical thinking;
- bring about a change of individual as well as collective values, attitudes and behaviour;
- encourage the active exercise of rights and duties, at both the local and global level;

in order to attain a more just and solidary world.

These processes are based on a coherent and mutually-coordinated strategy comprising of the following approaches:

- sensitising citizens and communities to development issues and challenges in North-South relations;
- raising awareness amongst citizens and communities on the interdependence between the 'North' and the 'South';
- committing citizens and communities to personal or collective actions for the benefit of a sustainable and just development model;
- mobilising citizens and communities to stand up for more just and more solidary policy choices at the local, national and international level.

2.2 Research rationale and questions

A mapping by De Bruyn (De Bruyn, 2012, 2013) provides a solid overview of the Belgian DEAR-sector. It maps out the main financial flows in 2007-2009, showing that with an accumulated budget of about 29 million euro in 2009, the Belgian governments (and especially the federal government) are among the main investors in DEAR in Europe. That budget rose to 33 million euro in 2010 and was estimated at 29 million for 2011 (Acodev, 2013, p. 28). The study also revealed that while the different federal, regional, and local governments are involved in financing DEAR, even more actors are involved in its implementation: schools, trade unions, private fourth pillar organisations, scientific institutes and cultural and media organisations. The bulk of the DEAR-budget (81% in 2009) is administered by the federal government (De Bruyn, 2012, p. 28), and more than half (56% in 2009) of governments' funding for DEAR goes to the development NGOs, who can be consid-

ered as the main providers of DEAR in Belgium (De Bruyn, 2012, p. 31). Looking at the subsidy applications for DEAR-programmes submitted for the period 2011-2013, the ten development NGOs with the biggest DEAR-budgets are: 11.11.11, Broederlijk Delen, CNCD, Vredeseilanden, World Solidarity (WSM), Djapo, Oxfam Solidariteit, TRIAS, SOS Faim, and Education First (EF). Information provision, mobilisation, lobby and advocacy, research, networking, and capacity building are all objectives of the NGOs, but *de facto* they invest most in DEAR-activities aimed at sensitisation and education. Development NGOs also agreed on a set of target groups for their DEAR-activities (ngo-federatie, 2011, p. 1): children and youth, educators, policy makers, civil society organisations, financial and economic organisations, constituency, media, and the general public. However, a closer look at the target groups explicitly envisaged in their 2008-2013 programmes revealed two interesting observations: (1) although quite some attention and a considerable share of the budget were devoted to the educational sector, technical and vocational secondary education were allocated limited means (about 0.26% of DEAR budget, see also 3.1); (2) despite the stated aim to also reach 'financial and economic organisations', the for-profit private sector did hardly feature amongst the mentioned target groups (receiving about 1.3% of DEAR budget, see also 4.1). However, this actor and activity mapping based on desk study of aggregated financial data, as well as previous mapping of innovative practices in DEAR (De Bruyn, 2009) did not allow for an extensive exploration of the why, the what and the how of these findings.

This paper reports on research that reframed these findings as a hypothesis to be tested and elaborated using a qualitative approach: *are vocational and technical secondary education (VTSE), and for-profit private sector actors 'underserved' target groups in the current DEAR-activities provided by Belgian development NGOs, and how can the (apparent) mismatch between the current supply of DEAR-activities and the needs of these two target groups be explained and remedied?* This central research question has been unpacked and rephrased in a set of sub-questions:

- compared to other target groups, do development NGOs indeed supply less DEAR-activities to VTSE and for-profit private sector?
- is the current supply of DEAR-activities provided by development NGO's and targeted at the VTSE and for-profit private sector adapted to the specific needs and characteristics of these target groups?
- (how) can the current supply of DEAR-activities provided by development NGO's and targeted at the VTSE and for-profit private sector be improved to better fit the specific needs and demands of these target groups?

Belgium is a federal state, composed of three communities and three regions. Consequently, different policy domains relevant to DEAR can be governed by different governmental actors and may each be subject to different policies depending on the region or community. The research focused on DEAR funded by the federal government but implemented in the Flemish region. Although some information and experiences from actors in the Walloon Region and Brussels Capital Region were included, the research findings refer mostly to the situation in the Flemish region, the DEAR-activities provided by Flemish development NGO's, the Flemish education system and Flemish for-profit actors.

2.3 Methodology

The research questions were approached through a combination of literature study and semi-structured expert interviews. We performed a review of policy documents and publicly available information on the current supply and demand of DEAR in Belgium (*e.g.* strategy notes by key DEAR actors, policy guidelines, evaluation reports of different NGO programmes, online databases of the current supply), as well as a screening of academic literature on development education

- especially in relation to vocational and technical education and private sector actors involved in development cooperation.

Additionally, we conducted semi-structured interviews with 18 key informants. Interviewees were selected because of their (organisation's) central role in the provision of DEAR-activities, or because they or their organisation belonged to one of the two target groups. For the latter maximum variation sampling was used in order to include perspectives from organisations that did make an appeal to DEAR and others that did not. On the supply side, we approached development NGOs involved in DEAR; the federations of Flemish and Walloon NGOs; and consultants involved in evaluation of DEAR programmes. On the demand side, gathering information on the reach of DEAR in VTSE, we contacted the pedagogic advisory services of different school systems (the Catholic school system, provincial education Flanders, and education of the Flemish community) as well as the provincial educational counsellors of Speak Out (see also 3.1). For more information on the reach within the for-profit, we interviewed KAURI (Belgian multi-actor learning network and knowledge centre on Corporate Responsibility and NGO Accountability), Business & Society Brussels, and Unizo (Organisation for the Self-Employed and SMEs) (full list of interviews, see Appendix 1).

The scope of this study did not allow to involve the 'end users' within the two focal target groups (the enterprises on the one hand, and the teachers and the students on the other) directly. Overall, the study could rely on only limited input from actors from within the school system, in part because of the awkward timing (during summer holiday) of data collection. However, the study has the added value that it builds upon existing quantitative and descriptive research, and takes a qualitative approach to test and discuss existing assumptions about matching supply and demand in DEAR.

3 | Technical and vocational education

3.1 Context

The secondary education in Flanders is currently organised in four different tracks: 'general or academic education' (GSE) focusing on theory and general knowledge, 'technical education' (TSE) combining theoretical with technical courses, practice-based 'vocational education' (VSE) and 'art education' (SAE) combining theoretical with artistic courses. The tracks are hierarchically ordered: students can 'cascade' from the most prestigious general track to the less esteemed technical and vocational track (and not the other way around). This 'cascade system' was critiqued for underrating and stigmatising students in vocational and technical education (VTSE), and for discouraging students to choose a track based on their interests and abilities (Dang Kim & Pelleriaux, 2006; Smet, 2010; Vlaamse Onderwijsraad, 2011). In 2013 a large-scale reform[1] of the education system was agreed on that, amongst other things, aims to address this issue but will only be implemented as of 2015 ('Akkoord over onderwijshervorming', 2013). Other relevant features of the Flemish education system are the introduction of cross-curricular attainment targets[2] (cf. Vakoverschrijdende Eindtermen of VOETEN) and the growing emphasis on cross-course and integrated activities (ngo-federatie, 2013, p. 3). Through its formulation of the cross-curricular attainment targets in 2002 and again in 2010, the government endorses the need for development education (Daens, Van Ongevalle & De Bruyn, 2011, p. 2; Winnelinckx, 2008, p. 11).

Within this setting, different actors play a crucial role in DEAR in VTSE (Daens *et al.*, 2011, p. 17-21; ngo-federatie, 2013, p. 4): firstly, there is the educational sector itself, including the government, the different school systems, the schools, and teachers. A second actor includes the development NGOs as external providers of DEAR and the different NGO platforms and umbrella organisations. Important to mention are ngo-federatie, the Flemish federation of development NGOs, and its counterpart Acodev, the Walloon federation of development NGOs. A third group comprises of mediating actors such as Speak Out (cf. Kleur bekennen/Annoncer la Couleur), a cooperation program between the Belgian Development Cooperation (BTC/CTB) and the Flemish provinces and community, aimed at promoting global education and global citizenship amongst youth between 10 and 18 years. Speak Out plays an important mediating role between the providers of DEAR and the schools and teachers, by centralising information on the supply of DEAR and facilitating schools' and teachers' access to DEAR. Other interesting actors are Klascement, an educational resource network aiming to facilitate the exchange of learning materials for class and school use. And finally, there are the providers of other types of education and aware-

1 The reform, as presented in juni 2013, includes a postponement of study choice, improving the connection between primary and secondary education, a focus on interest areas instead of tracks (`Akkoord over onderwijshervorming,' 2013).

2 Attainment targets are the minimum goals (meaning knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes) the government considers as necessary and achievable for a specific pupil population. The targets can be course-specific or cross-course. Cross-course or cross-curricular targets do not belong to certain field of study but are to be pursued by integrating them in different courses and through cross-course projects. In GSE it is encouraged through `open space', in TSE by `integrated assignements' and in VSE through the `integration of theory and practice by thematic projects (ngo-federatie, 2013, p. 3).

ness raising, such as on environment, human rights, media, or national history (cf. herinneringseducatie), which in Belgium are all considered components of 'global citizen's education'.[3]

De Bruyn's (2011) screening of NGOs' 2011-2013 programmes showed that 26% of their funds for DEAR was targeted at the education sector, making it the most important target group. Within this target group however, only 1% of the budget was explicitly ascribed to activities in VTSE. Meaning only 0.26% of the overall DEAR-budget was explicitly allocated to VTSE (De Bruyn, 2012, p. 75-80).

3.2 The supply of DEAR for VTSE

Development NGOs doubt the finding that their DEAR-programmes 'underserve' VTSE as a target group. Especially the conclusion that only 1% of their DEAR-budget for the education sector targets VTSE is questioned. In fact, a recent internal mapping of DEAR-activities managed by ngo-federatie, the Flemish federation of development NGO's, indicates that general secondary education (cf. ASO), technical secondary education (cf. TSO), vocational secondary education (cf. BSO) and secondary artistic education (cf. KSO) are each targeted by an almost equal number of products (Demedts, 2013). Ngo-federatie initiated the mapping in 2011, and it has since taken the form of an online database where registered NGO's can report on the theme, method and target group (age, educational program, and teacher) of the products they offer. It is not publicly available as its objective is not to inform a wider public, but to improve internal coordination between the NGOs.

Other channels, such as Speak Out and Klascement (see also 3.1), aim to inform educational actors about the available choice of DEAR products provided by external actors (such as development NGOs). Searches in their databases of DEAR-activities do not reveal a strong bias at the detriment of vocational and technical programmes either. A search for 'workshops' targeted at GSE results in one more hit compared to TSE and in 16 more hits compared to VSE (see Appendix 2). On a total of more than 250 workshops, the difference is not at all outspoken. In the database of Klascement (contrary to Speak Out not specialised in DEAR but offering an overview of different educational materials), the searches for vocational and technical education deliver more hits than the ones for general education (see Appendix 2). A closer look shows that the extra hits for vocational and technical target groups are indeed products specifically aimed at those groups, whereas no products are specifically targeted at GSE and excluding VTSE.

All in all, looking at the number of activities in the existing (partial) overviews, the supply of DEAR does not seem to favour GSE at the detriment of VTSE. However, experts interviewed did express the impression that there is less material available aimed specifically at VTSE. What can explain this impression, as well as the limited budget 2011-2013 NGO programs allocated to DEAR in VTSE? A first explanation may be that, after the initial focus on primary education at the start of DEAR, NGOs have been 'catching up'. The two NGO federations (ngo-federatie and Acodev) confirm that over the past three to four years, NGOs have done efforts to scale up their activities aimed at secondary education, beginning with GSE and expanding towards VTSE.[4] Some important initiatives in this regard, such as several projects by Studio Globo (Agentschap voor Internationale Samenwerking, 2010; Demedts, 2013) were however financed by the Flemish government and

3 In Belgium, development education is seen as one of the components of global citizen's education. Together with other types of education, on environment, media, human rights, peace, it constitutes 'global education'. In this approach, development education in Belgium is definited narrower than is the common practice in other countries or in European institutions (Daens, Van Ongevalle & De Bruyn, 2011, p. 8).

4 One example is Via Don Bosco, who in its 2011-2013 programme reoriented its DEAR activities to (1) secondary education and (2) priority attention for schools providing TSE and VSE.

therefore do not appear in the study by De Bruyn, which focused on federal funding. The NGO platforms as well as individual NGOs also point at increased efforts to raise the participation of VSE and TSE schools in existing activities such as workshops, immersions, and teacher study days.

A second explanation lies in the fact that there were no fixed rules for target group description in the 2011-2013 NGO programs. NGOs that planned DEAR for one or several of the tracks in secondary education (general, vocational, technical) may have labelled the target audience simply as 'secondary education'. However, their internal mapping (coordinated by ngo-federatie) and the databases of Speak Out and Klascement do demand a more detailed target group specification. Consequently, in such overviews of the supply, NGOs have become more consistent in explicitly mentioning VTSE in the target group specifications of their material. However, this does not necessarily mean that it has been developed explicitly for VTSE. Interviewees raise the question to what extent the material now being labelled as 'also suitable for VTSE' is truly adapted to this specific target audience.

Broadening the view from the amount of DEAR at the disposal of VTSE to the number of VTSE actors actually making an appeal to it would be interesting, but little data on the actual reach of the supply is available. A 2010 study on 'citizenship education' concluded that when it comes to external supply of 'citizenship education', VTSE schools seem to organise more internally and create a supply tailored to the needs of their students by developing activities or projects themselves, more so than GSE. With globalisation the idea of 'citizenship education' was reoriented to 'global citizenship' and the study's scope might therefore not match the current DEAR perfectly but it still provides valuable insights in the reach and challenges of DEAR and related educations. One of the study's main conclusions supports the importance of a well-adapted approach for the specific target audience: 'An adaptation of the provided supply to the specific student population appears to be a condition for the use of and participation [of schools] in this supply' (Kavadias & Dehertogh, 2010, p. 60-61, our translation).

3.3 Unadapted supply?

The main question might not be whether there is an equal amount of DEAR-material and activities available to each of the education tracks (VSE, TSE, GSE, SAE). Pushing for an even supply to all target groups, could lead to a *de facto* labelling of materials as being suitable for as many target audiences as possible, without taking into account whether it does actually meet the specific needs of certain target groups. When looking at the descriptions of DEAR materials on NGO-websites and in the different databases, this seems to be already the case. For example, workshop descriptions in the Speak Out database most often state that they are suitable for all types of secondary education (general, technical, vocation, artistic, part-time vocation, as well as special secondary education). A recent brochure on educational tools for international solidarity in the Walloon region describes the target groups only by age, and not by type of education (Iles des Paix, 2012). And in its list of educational material for the 2013 campaign on hunger, 11.11.11, the umbrella organisation of Flemish development NGOs, describes the target audiences as 'everyone', or 'all grades, all programs' or 'GSE, TSE, VSE, SAE'. This seems to be common practice on websites providing information on supply.

Such broadly defined target audiences raise the question whether the materials are sufficiently adapted to the specific needs and demands of each of these audiences. Depending on the track, school culture or student population, a specific pedagogical approach might be more suitable, and differences in the organisation of the different tracks and schools might also demand for a tailor-made approach. Several interviewees voiced their impression that most materials and activities are

developed and designed for a GSE audience. In some cases slightly adapted versions are put at the disposition of VTSE, but most often a 'one size fits all' approach is taken. How worrisome is this practice? Interviewees have differing opinions on this topic. On the one hand this conflicts with the assumption that different groups have different pedagogical needs. Also, this comes across as a preferential treatment for one target group (youth in GSE), instead of recognising the equal importance of youth enrolled in other educational programs. On the other hand, such a uniform approach avoids the trap of stigmatisation. Offering 'special' materials for VTSE, or not explicitly including them in the list of possible target groups of existing materials, could be interpreted as a statement that they are not 'good enough' for the main stream DEAR and need a simplified version. Also, any group label, whether GSE, VSE or TSE, can hide strong diversity within the group. Strong target group specialisation might overstress the difference between the different educational programs, leading to more stigmatisation on the one hand and a lack of awareness for the diversity within these target groups on the other hand.

The interviews, as well as different programme evaluations and studies (Ace Europe, 2010; Ace Europe, 2013; AceEurope, 2012; Iles de Paix, 2010; Daens *et al.*, 2011; Winnelinckx, 2008) did also provide a list of features that may hinder current DEAR's 'match' with VTSE. Firstly, often DEAR was considered as unsuccessful in connecting with the daily life and world of the youth they aim to engage. Quite often these materials (*e.g.* workshops, lessons, presentations or games) are so meticulously designed and on such a tight schedule, that there is no room for improvisation or unanticipated discussion. This means there is little room for maneuver to look for connection with the opinions and experiences of the participating students. Also, the materials do not always offer a clear 'entry' for students. This was illustrated by an interviewee questioning why a specific role play workshop did not have any youth role in it: wouldn't it be easier for the students to identify with a peer in a developing country, than to impersonate a female farmer with five children struggling to survive?

However, this disconnect is especially true for youth in VTSE: DEAR fails to take into account: (1) the often difficult socio-economic situations of these students; (2) the fact that these soon to be professionals are counting off the days before they will (have to) support themselves and have very concrete things they have to provide for; (3) the different language use. Or to say it in one interviewee's words: 'NGO's are a middle class phenomenon, and that's a disadvantage when you try to engage other groups'. Several examples were given to illustrate these lapses, such as the cost of the transport to a workshop, or the focus of certain initiatives on fund-raising, which for students in VTSE are often less evident than for GSE students. An interesting case illustrating these differences, is the initiative Zuiddag organised by Vredeseilanden. It is a very successful and popular initiative, building bridges between students, development cooperation and the private sector, by organising a one-day work experience for students who then donate their day's wage to a good cause. However, for students in GSE one day on the work floor is a new and existing experience, whereas students in VSE often already combine school with work during apprenticeships in companies (cf. leercontracten). In this regard, the model of Zuiddag seems to be a better fit for GSE students.

Secondly, the available DEAR material testifies of unrealistic assumptions of what is achievable in TSE or VSE classes: the content is often too complex, too abstract and too elaborate; the focus lies too much on the cognitive dimension of learning and not enough on action and experiencing; it remains 'stuck' in a school setting; presenters or workshop facilitators do not always know how the 'handle' a class and maintain discipline. The interviewees' comments are supported by different studies (on DEAR or related educations) identifying similar challenges (Iles de Paix, 2010, p. 119-123; Kavadias & Dehertogh, 2010, p. 52-61, p. 96). These challenges could be explained by

the fact that the materials are developed by NGO professionals who may not have (recent) teaching experience. However, many NGOs in fact do involve teachers by asking them for feedback on draft versions of the materials under development. Also, teachers are not always enthusiastic about being involved more in the design process, due to their heavy work load, but also because they often do not feel they have the necessary expertise in development issues.

A third critique uttered, was that current DEAR gives too little importance to the enforcement and capacitation of the teachers. VSE and TSE teachers interviewed in the context of different programme evaluations testified they feel insecure when teaching certain DEAR-packages because they themselves do not grasp all the nuances and have difficulty translating the abstract concepts in a language that is accessible to their students. They indicated that they would have 'to study' DEAR-material before being able to use it in class, and due to time constraints this was often a deal breaker in the decision to use it (unpublished evaluation reports; Daens *et al.*, 2011, p. 20-22).

3.4 Ways forward?

Although the scope of the data collection does not allow this study to make bold statements on what students and teachers in VTSE need, it did render some interesting reflections and perspectives on how to improve the fit between supply and demand of DEAR in VTSE.

A first challenge for DEAR, visible in all educational tracks but especially in VTSE, is *to be more responsive to the specific context and environment of the pupils*. According to the interviewees this might be tackled by:

- designing DEAR in such a way that interaction with the students is encouraged (and prioritised above covering all the content). Discussion and interaction is an important tool to engage youth in VTSE. Their direct and open communication styles can be a challenge for class management, but are also considered an advantage one should try to exploit. This may mean letting go of the ambition to treat a certain topic exhaustively and instead allowing for elaborations or 'detours' that reflect the students' preoccupations;
- developing DEAR that in content and message matches more with VTSE audiences. Approaching certain topics from a technical or vocational perspective, or at least including examples that speak to a VTSE audience is one way of contributing to this. Another important aspect is recognising and respecting that not all students can engage with the issues DEAR raises in the same way. DEAR should offer action perspectives that all students can live up to. For some students, building a mobile school might be a more engaging action perspective than doing a presentation for fellow students, participating in door-to-door fund raising or buying fair trade food and clothing. Interviewees in development NGOs reported positive experiences when their DEAR appealed to the skills and professional ethics of youth in VTSE;
- Being aware of the different language use in different student populations, and adjust DEAR materials and activities accordingly (see box).

Box 2: in search of VTSE ... some interesting initiatives amongst development NGOs

Mobile School vzw is an organisation that uses mobile schools to reach out to street kids in developing countries and stimulate their emancipation. The mobile schools are developed and built by Belgian youth in VTSE. Mobile School testified how they were impressed by the high standards and the strong engagement these pupils displayed when they were being presented with a challenge that they could address by using their talents and skills: building a mobile, foldable school, all-weather resistant and difficult to steal.

VIA Don Bosco vzw supports training centres in Africa, Latin-America and Asia. These help underprivileged youth to acquire the professional and life skills needed to succeed in the world of work and become active citizens. VIA Don Bosco also raises awareness among Belgian youth, their teachers and educators about North-South relations. Together with the Centre for Language and Education it developed 'tips and tricks' for developing educational materials that target pupils in vocational education. Some of their findings: give students functional assignments that have a clear use, allow them to work with authentic and, if possible, tangible material, and avoid jargon or abstract concepts such as 'Sub-Sahara Africa', 'structural', 'chronic' or 'sustainable'.

With their action model 'Zuidprik', Broederlijk Delen vzw stimulates youth to convince as many people as possible to show solidarity across borders. Zuidprik is set up as a competition. Groups of youngsters from the age of 16 (often schools) can register and are presented with different challenges. By tackling the challenges, they can collect points and win a prise. This action model succeeded in reaching youth in VSE, TSE and GSE equally. Part of the success can be attributed to the competition element and the nature of the challenges that often also had a commercial and/or technical dimension, *e.g.* 'build a cart and race against the solar car' or 'develop a cool coffee product'.

A second challenge for DEAR is catering for *different pedagogical needs*. Individual students differ in the ways they learn best, and quite some efforts have been done to map these differences: A very influential model is Kolb's Cycle of Learning that distinguishes between reflective observation (learning by watching and listening), concrete experience (learning from feeling), abstract conceptualisation (learning by thinking) and active experimentation (learning by doing).Next to how they learn, students also differ in how they become engaged. An interesting Dutch initiative called 'YoungMentality', for example, divided Dutch youth between eight and eighteen years old into six different categories according to their dominant values and driving motivations, such as their sense for exploration or their search for social status (Motivaction, 2005). These and many other models and typologies stress how diverse target audiences can be: how we learn and become engaged differs, not only between groups but also within groups and on the individual level. This argues for offering DEAR with different learning and engagement approaches. However, interviewees' remark that the current material remains rather uniform in this regard, and plead for more diversity in DEAR, with special attention for visual, experiential and action based models. Obviously, development NGOs can't offer a personalised DEAR package for each student, but providing teachers with a set of modules taking different learning and engagement approaches and with different degree of difficulty, allowing them to compose the best fit for their class, could go a long way too.

Thirdly, in order to bring the developed DEAR material to the student, *teachers need to be capacitated more*. Especially in VTSE, teachers are reported to feel they lack the expertise to discuss the issues addressed in DEAR. Offering DEAR material in a language accessible for pupils, and therefore relieving teachers of translating difficult concepts into accessible language, would be one way to break down barriers.

A fourth question is how to *fit DEAR to the specific architecture of VTSE*. On the one hand interviewees argue for the integration of DEAR in all courses, included practical courses such as electricity or building technique. Why not, for example, address the exploitation of natural resources such as wood or precious metals in relation to carpentry or metalworking, or discuss greenhouse gas reduction in courses on building technique or cooking? It could be feasible and interesting to connect and complement the general and often theoretical discussion of many DEAR issues with hands-on

applications and practices. On the other hand, some interviewees consider this a bridge too far and believe this would demand too much of the teachers and would disturb the often individually organised work in the workshops. Instead they argue for the optimal use of the opportunities embedded in the specific VTSE architecture: the attainment targets and the structure of VTSE allow for more space (compared to GSE) for DEAR because of the emphasis on 'open space' and cross-curricular work and project work (cf. *e.g.* In PAV of project algemene vakken).

Finally, some interviewees point out that the research hypothesis and the idea of targeting 'VTSE audience' in fact lumps together VSE en TSE. Yet, there is little evidence to argue that GSE differs more from VSE and TSE than VSE and BSE differ from each other. On top of that, interviewees point out that within the educational sector, other target groups exist that receive even less attention, such as secondary artistic education, part-time education or adult education.

Overall there seems to be a strong consensus that differentiating between VSE, TSE and GSE needs would be an inappropriate simplification. The diversity within these tracks, between schools and even between classes is too strong to rely on 'track uniform' approaches. When looking for a better fit between DEAR and the needs/demands of the different educational tracks (GSE, VSE, TSE), respecting and meeting the needs of each specific target audience, without contributing to further stigmatisation of vocational and technical education will be crucial. More flexibility and diversity in content (including VTSE perspectives, appealing to VTSE skills, and allowing for student interaction) as well as in pedagogical approaches (information files, action based models, audio-visual materials, games), and allowing teachers to pick-and-choose the ideal combo could help to address this.

4 | For-profit private sector

4.1 Context

Outlooks on development and development cooperation have been characterised by a succession of paradigms advocating differing divisions of labour between market, state and civil society. Consequently the ways and extent in which development policy viewed and engaged the private sector as an explicit actor in development varied extensively. Over the past decade the trend was to disapprove of development cooperation that benefits the donor's private sector, to move towards the untying of aid and to focus on soft instead of productive sectors of development. However, currently several drivers[5] are triggering a renewed interest in the role of the private sector in development. The financial crisis on the one hand and the discussion on the effectiveness of aid on the other hand, prompt a push for the realignment of the roles of the state and the private sector in poverty eradication. At the backdrop of the financial crisis, cash-strapped ODA-donors are emphasising the potential of the private sector to leverage aid resources, and business is being pushed firmly back on the international and national development agendas.

In Belgium too, the federal government states that it firmly underscores the important role played by the private sector, and has increased its support to and through the private sector. In 2012 reportedly 0.6% of its budget for development cooperation was spent on direct support to the private sector (Belgian Development Cooperation, 2012, p. 4). With this money, the Belgian government supports various activities in the private sector domain: Over the years it increased its funding to the Belgian Investment Company for Developing Countries (BIO), which invests directly in private sector projects in developing countries. It also established a dedicated budget line, geared towards boosting companies' capacity in developing countries. A Trade for Development Centre was founded in 2009, and in 2008 the Belgian platform 'Ondernemen voor Ontwikkeling'[6] was set up. The Belgian Development Cooperation underwrites the reasoning that 'stimulating the private sector in developing countries generates economic growth which, in turn, is an important pillar in the quest for sustainable development and the fight against poverty' (Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, 2013).

For many development NGOs, the relationship with the for-profit private sector is founded on a very different analysis. This analysis strongly questions the equation between 'economic growth' and 'development', and takes a critical stance towards the activities of the for-profit private sector. But in the globalised world of today, the power of business is undeniable. The private sector can make or break an enabling context for sustainable development, and it can mobilise huge financial

5 Some of these drivers are: (1) the financial crisis and the possible implementation of alternative financing mechanisms that might mobilise private sector funds for development; (2) the prevailing assumption amongst policy makers in government and the private sector that business would be good (or even better) at delivering on aid effectiveness; (3) the expected impact of climate change on global food supply chains as incentive for investment in sustainable business models; (4) the central role private sector plays in the development strategies of some emerging economies (*e.g.* China); (5) external pressure from watchdog NGOs, trade unions and media to improve the social and ecological business practices; (6) the political preferences by right wing governments in a number of European countries for a larger role of the market in the governance of aid; and (7) the emergence of new attitudes towards entrepreneurship and its role in society, visible in the attention for social entrepreneurship, inclusive business, corporate social responsibility (CSR)(Huyse & Vaes, 2012, p. 26).

6 Unfortunately little information is available on the current activities of the platform.

resources. Consequently they are, willingly or unwillingly, important stakeholders for development NGOs. As one interviewee summarises: 'the private sector is a big part of the problem. Consequently it is part of the solution too'. Whereas some Belgian development NGOs may already have a longstanding relationship with the private sector, most are in search of a safe way to engage with the private sector, and are deciding what that engagement should entail. Some interesting initiatives attempt to bridge the gap between companies and NGOs. One such initiative is KAURI, the Belgian multi-actor learning network and knowledge centre on Corporate Responsibility and NGO Accountability. Over 270 companies, NGOs, knowledge centres and government institutions joined this network that aims to promote stakeholder dialogue and proactive stakeholder engagement between companies and NGOs. Another such bridge builder is Ondernemers voor Ondernemers, whose network members are either companies interested in the Global South or recognised development NGOs with economically inspired projects in the South. While NGOs are repositioning themselves in relation to the private sector, something 'is moving' in the private sector too. From corporate philanthropy, over corporate social responsibility and corporate social accountability, all the way to social entrepreneurship and conscious capitalism: a range of different models are attempting to reposition business in society.

Despite these trends, that make for-profit private sector a key stakeholder in development, research has shown that official development cooperation and development NGOs initiate very little DEAR targeted specifically and directly at the private sector. De Bruyn (2012) concluded that according to their 2011-2013 programmes with the federal government, development NGOs devoted 1.3% of their DEAR budget to activities targeting 'private companies'. The share of DEAR aimed at 'international financial institutions' was negligible (De Bruyn, 2012, p. 56).

4.2 The supply of DEAR for for-profit private sector

In the Belgian DEAR scene the trend of cautious rapprochement between private sector and NGOs is apparently not very explicit yet. The mapping by De Bruyn (2012) indicated that, according to their 2011-2013 programmes submitted with the federal government, the development NGOs plan very little DEAR aimed specifically at the private sector. In June 2013, the federal government stated that until now the private sector hasn't been engaged sufficiently in its development education initiatives. In order to address this lacuna, it launched a call for DEAR projects specifically aimed at enterprises[7] (Directie-generaal Ontwikkelingssamenwerking, 2013). Development NGOs themselves share the observation that the private sector is 'underserved'. Information channels, overviews or coordination mechanisms comparable to the ones for DEAR in the education sector do not exist for DEAR targeting the private sector, a fact that in itself points to the underdevelopment of DEAR for business. However, the lack of information, the differing interpretations of DEAR for business and remarks by private sector representatives urge for caution in drawing quick conclusions.

'NGO open book', an initiative stimulating transparency into the functioning of Belgian NGOs, provides some additional information on the supply-side. Its website gives an overview of the different DEAR target groups and lists which NGOs serve what target groups (see Table 4.1). In this overview only the label 'financial and economic world' refers to private sector actors and it is by far the least popular target group: only 17 NGOs indicated to target this group, compared to 53 to 32 NGOs for all other target groups. The NGOs listed to have DEAR activities aimed at this

7 However, development NGOs who are recognised by the federal government and already receive federal funding are disqualified from the call (Directie-generaal Ontwikkelingssamenwerking, 2013, p. 3). This may create an opportunity for new actors to enter the field of DEAR targeting the for-profit private sector.

group are: 11.11.11, Advocaten Zonder Grenzen, Broederlijk Delen, Committee for the Cancellation of the Third World Debt (CADTM), Commission Justice et Paix (CJP), Centre national de coopération au développement (CNCD), Groupe de recherche pour une stratégie économique alternative (GRESEA), Groupe One, Ingénieurs sans Frontières (ISF), Internationale Vredesmediadienst (Ipis), Max Havelaar, Oxfam Wereldwinkels (OWW), Protos, Plan België, Trias, Volens, and Vredeseilanden.

Table 4.1 List of target groups and number of NGOs according to NGO Open Book

Target group	Number of active NGOs
Public at large	53
Children & youth	53
Constituency/own members	44
Educators & teachers	36
Policy makers	35
Media	35
Civil society organisations	32
Financial and economic world	*15*

* On a total of 81 NGOs.
Source www.ngo-openboek.be/nl/ngo-belgie-home/ngo-belgie-educatie

In theory NGO Open Book contains the details on all activities of all recognised NGOs with a membership to one of the NGO federations. But, the limited number of NGOs reporting to target the 'financial and economic world' does raise questions. A possible explanation would be that the rather vague description of this target group, without further explanation or specifications, led to underreporting. The fact that the member lists of initiatives such as Kauri and Ondernemers voor Ondernemers feature quite some organisations that are not listed by NGO Open Book, point in this direction too. Apparently there are some NGOs that do wish to reach the private sector but don't consider it as one of their main activities in Belgium and did not report it.

In the interviews, the private sector representatives bring yet another perspective to the table. In general they seem to agree that a wide gap continues to exist between development NGOs and companies. At the same time Business & Society Belgium reported being overwhelmed by NGO-requests for 'matchmaking' with enterprises (especially with the aim of finding sponsors). It launched a LinkedIn Group titled 'Matching Business and Society' in order to channel these demands. At Kauri's 2012 speed date, big companies were the most popular 'dates' amongst NGOs. Kauri also pointed out that the fragmented NGO landscape deters interested enterprises from engaging. Especially because also environment NGOs are, even more than development NGOs, developing policies and strategies to cooperate with their for-profit stakeholders. A caterer, for example, can be approached by Bioforum (working on biological food), Oxfam and Max Havelaar (working on fair trade), Vredeseilanden (working on sustainable product chains and small-scale farming), and EVA (promoting vegetarianism). That's not taking into account NGOs that wish to recruit the company as sponsor. Consequently enterprises with a budding interest in cross-sector cooperation with NGOs may have difficulty seeing the forest for the trees.

Overall there seems to be a general feeling of a 'mismatch' between development NGOs and private sector, but a lacking supply of DEAR activities specifically for enterprises might not be the only or main cause. Not just the quantity, but also the nature of the DEAR supply should be investigated. NGO Open Book doesn't provide further details on these activities. However, the information gathered through interviews and a screening of the NGO websites indicate that the listed

NGOs' outreach to this target groups takes on very different degrees and forms. Max Havelaar, OWW, and Vredeseilanden for example distinguish themselves by having an outspoken and thought-out approach to private sector actors. Their relationship with private sector actors is one of structural (but by no means uncritical) cooperation. Their DEAR specifically (although not exclusively) targets for-profit actors and they have activities and communication geared to the private sector. However, most of the listed NGOs are not known to have structural DEAR aimed at the private sector. Their interactions with the private sector are often ad hoc and mostly in the role of watchdog. Several NGOs do indicate on their websites or in interviews that they are open to cooperation with the private sector. Examples are Broederlijk Delen, Trias, or Plan België, whose websites offers information on how companies can support their cause. Several NGOs also reported to be in the process of redefining their relationship with the private sector, and experience this to be a charged and controversial issue. And finally there are some NGOs whose more technically-oriented core business paved the way for a more pragmatic and less controversial relationship with private sector actors, like for example in the case of Protos, working on water issues, and Ingénieurs sans Frontières (Engineers without Borders).

Research has already shown that NGOs and private sector are not homogeneous in their attitudes and practices towards each other. Existing typologies and examples demonstrate that the private sector actor can be attributed different roles in the interaction with an NGO: (1) as a bull's eye, its activities being scrutinised, in some cases condemned, in others challenged by recommendations (watchdog); (2) as a sponsor, being invited to donate funds or in kind for the good cause (sponsorship); (3) as a concerned party, either being involved in the implementation of (technical) aspects of the NGO's activities, or being open to information and/or exchange to raise awareness (advocacy, awareness raising); (4) as a partner, attempting to align the core business to the aim of sustainable development and to address structural barriers to sustainable development (process support, certification) (Heap, 1998, p. 11-13; van der Heul, 2012; Interviews). In practice these different ways to engage with private sector can overlap, and can differ in yet another way: being either structural or ad hoc. For example, an NGO can combine its critical stance towards business and a structural watchdog role with ad hoc cooperation to assist companies in addressing the critique they receive. Or, an NGO can use the (structural) sponsorship of a company as an entry to do awareness raising within the company and advocate for more ethical business practices. The interviews also clearly revealed that NGOs differ in the way their frameworks on private sector interaction are developed: some have a well-developed, thought-out and outspoken policy, in some organisations a discussion on the best approach is still ongoing, and in others it remains quiet altogether. This overview of the different characteristics in NGO-business sector engagements, by no means exhaustive, already shows that NGOs can take different approaches when they 'reach out' to business. The available information indicates that in most cases Belgian NGOs focus on sponsorship relationships and - to a lesser extent - on the watchdog role, most often aimed strongly at big and visible companies. At the same time, this issue is on the agenda of different organisations and NGO federations, showing the position towards private sector is a work in progress.

Like quantity and the nature of the supply, the demand for DEAR on business side remains under researched and obscure. Quite some (international) publications, initiatives and trend watchers argue that 'there is something moving' in the private sector (Bulloch, Lacy & Jurgens, 2011; Business & Society Belgium, 2011; van Huijstee, 2012; Zharkevich & Judge, 2010). Business is repositioning itself in society. For some the search stops at the perfect 'good cause', some attempt to do business in a more socially responsible way, and a few aim to found their business model on their social responsibility and accountability (instead of *vice versa*). Interviewees notice this trend in Belgium too. 'It can be recycled paper, fair trade tea, or employees volunteering in Africa ... but there is hardly any company that doesn't do anything!', one interviewee stated. However, opinions

on how profound this shift actually is, and consequently on what kind of support from outside actors such as NGOs could be in demand, differ. According to some interviewees most enterprises are in search of ready-made, accessible and personalised sponsorship formulas. Others complain about the current focus on sponsorships, and argue for deeper types of commitment and process support by NGOs that 'understand' business. While this may be a need, interviewees also indicate that the demand might by far more conservative, as only few companies today are ready to make fundamental changes in their business culture. In that sense basic awareness raising and advocacy remain crucial.

4.3 Unadapted supply?

The analysis above indicates that development NGOs' interactions with private sector are dominated by one-size-fits-all sponsorship formulas or to some extent by the watchdog role (mostly targeting large and visible companies). NGOs seem to offer a rather limited range of options, and pay little attention to target group segmentation within the private sector. In general the interviewees considered this at odds with what they perceive as *needs* of the private sector, but they disagree about extent to which the supply meets the expressed *demand* amongst private sector actors. In other words, the interviewees believe that the private sector in facts needs DEAR that pushes and facilitates a more structural and profound engagement in sustainable development, but they also recognise that few companies are proactively calling for this. They also identify different explanations for the mismatch between business and development NGOs.

One of the major issues is the huge image problem development cooperation apparently has. First of all, critique on the traditional development cooperation approaches is on the rise and many studies question the results development cooperation delivered over the past 50 years. With the budget cuts in development cooperation, its future is considered uncertain. Consequently, NGOs are seen as part of an ineffective sector and a 'sector in demise'. Secondly, companies seem to doubt the efficiency and accountability of NGOs. The fragmentation of the NGO landscape is one explanation. Another explanation for this impression is the inexplicit assumption that NGOs are not spending their money in the best and soundest way because (a) it's not their own money, 'they get it for free' and (b) their survival doesn't depend on their return on investment. Interviewees also report that very few companies know the NGO landscape and even less are informed about the internal decision making and accountability structures, or the stringent monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements they are subjected to. The overall sector of development cooperation and development NGOs too seem to have an unfavourable reputation. At the same time, often companies don't know the sector well enough and are unaware of recent evolutions in accountability or track records of NGOs.

Closely related is the belief that NGOs lack feeling with, and even respect for, the private sector. Their idea of 'private sector' is seen as limited to multinational companies (MNCs), and without regard for the huge differences between small and middle-sized enterprises, big companies, and multinationals, they lump all private sector actors together. Since they get to play by very different ('easier') rules, NGOs don't really understand the choices and challenges entrepreneurs face. On top of that, NGOs are perceived as being unaware of this lacuna or, even worse, unwilling to address it. They 'thrive on idealism' and their attitude towards private sector at large is seen as marked by anti-capitalist values and deep distrust. They are perceived as being convinced of their own message, often taking the moral high ground, and lacking an open attitude or a curiosity towards 'the realities of doing business'. Consequently they take positions that for entrepreneurs are difficult to understand and even hurtful. The 2009-2010 campaign on decent work was used as an

illustration. Summarised, NGOs are often perceived as ignorant but unwilling to learn, arrogant and paternalistic: 'They are the good guys, we are the bad guys, except when they need money'.

Organisational traits as well as current trends in the private sector are also pointed out as a partial explanation for a mismatch. Substantial but often tacit differences in the management of companies and NGOs can complicate the interaction between them, and may cause misunderstandings or feed distrust. For example, companies' frustrations with slow and capricious decision processes in NGOs can run high, whereas *vice versa* NGOs see decision-making in companies as top-down and non-participatory. Also, the allocation of financial and human resources, as well as the job motivations of professionals in the private and the NGO sector might be disparate. When such differences are not made explicit, they risk undermining any interaction. The current economic climate puts efforts for expanding corporate social responsibility under pressure and pushes companies to go 'back to the basics'. This aligns with the current focus on embedding companies locally, at the detriment of the global dimension of CSR. Reportedly this has consequences in multinationals that are not Belgium-based and in transnational cooperations: more and more often the headquarters take over the global dimension of CRS - in most cases delegating it in turn to their own foundation - while the national subsidiaries only have the mandates to engage locally in order to build public support. This has for example been the case with ArcelorMittal, Procter&Gamble, BASF and Delhaize.

Next, the entrepreneur mentality is also reported to complicate a rapprochement with NGOs. Since entrepreneurs are in general enterprising, and since their appreciation for the plethora of NGOs is often limited, they tend to either take things into their own hands or turn to an organisation with which they already have a good - often personal - relationship. This can result in the establishment or the cooperation with a fourth pillar project,[8] another actor with which NGOs have a complicated relationship.

Finally, companies want a win-win but NGOs often fail to come up with the right arguments, in the rights words and in the right format: 'NGOs are good at writing long texts, in NGO-speak about things a company doesn't really care about' and 'because it's the right thing to do', is not a good reason!'. Yet, the win-win isn't always hard to find. It can be in terms of marketing and communication, or good 'PR'. It can be the possibility to train staff in a different setting or to give staff the opportunity to volunteer. It can be the conviction that sustainable production in fact is a condition for continuation of production all together. Motivations for engaging with 'development' comes in all shapes and sizes, an NGO needs to find the right entry and decide what kind of 'win' they want to offer.

4.4 Ways forward?

In Belgium the supply of DEAR activities specialised in private sector is slacking, but on the other hand there doesn't seem to be a marked demand from the private sector either. However, interviewees, often inspired by good examples, do believe that NGOs could achieve a better reach

8 The actors of the three specialised pillars (donor governments, multilateral organisations, and NGO) are no longer considered the only authorities in the field of development cooperation. Other institutions and organisations are staking their claim, taking over a part of the tasks or suggesting alternative methods. The rise of non-specialists includes other government departments (ministry of education, ministry of trade), trade unions, farmers' associations, social movements, schools, hospitals, foundations, migrant organisations, companies, sports clubs and many groups of friends. Based on their experiences in their own communities and economies in the North, these new actors are forging ties with their colleagues and communities in the South. We refer to these organisations, institutions and private initiatives as the fourth pillar in development co-operation (Develtere & De Bruyn, 2009, p. 913).

within the private sector. In broader literature too, there are strong arguments in favour of cross-sector cooperation - a synergy in expertise, action radius and impact to name but a few. Although the challenges and traps in such multistakeholder and cross-sector cooperations are often underestimated, more and more inspiring examples exist (see Box 3 and Box 4) (Bulloch *et al.*, 2011; Davies, 2010; Pratt *et al.*, 2012).

Different tips, tricks and more fundamental reflections on ways forward emerge from the interviews. As stated, the private sector covers a wide range of actors, including global financial or economic institutions, multinational companies (MNCs), small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and micro-enterprises. Each of these has the potential to contribute to development directly (through channels such as employment and income, infrastructure, goods and services, philanthropy, and corporate social responsibility) and indirectly (in areas such as tax, policy, governance and the impact on the environment (Coghlan, 2009, p. 2). Recognising this diversity, would be a good place to start. Next step would be to *'get to know'* these different actors better. What does their value chain look like, what challenges do they face, what drives them, and what are their blind spots? Building this understanding could include hiring more people with a business background or, why not, organising 'immersions' for NGO people - it might unveil some blind spots in NGOs and at least show a sincere interest in entrepreneurship.

Another remark is the importance of *a personalised approach,* at both the company and the individual level. Not very different from the comments regarding youth in VTSE, the interviewees indicate that the key to engaging companies is to 'connect' with one of the core issues of the company, and to 'touch' key figures in the company with your message. This however is not possible through ready-made one-size-fits-all activities or cooperation models offered on the website. At the company level, this means that the offered DEAR needs to be or become 'a perfect fit' in all its aspects (theme, partners, location, and degree of cooperation). Companies go for cooperation with partners that strike a chord, with whom they have good experiences, who offer them the right win-win and who make them stand out. At the individual level too, a personal contact with key figures can do wonders. Different interviewees pointed at the potential of immersions in this regard because, to say it in the words of a private sector representative, they 'have the power to change someone's DNA'. Immersions with high level business people even have an extra leveraging effect (see Box 3).

Box 3: the power of immersions

Different development NGOs and social entrepreneurs organise immersions for business leaders, and have experienced this to have a true impact. Trias for example sent Karel Van Eetvelt, director of the Organisation for the Self-Employed and SMEs (UNIZO) and Piet van Temsche, head of the Flemish farmers association together to the Philippines in 2013. Next to the personal impression this journey left on both men, Trias was especially satisfied with how well the news and stories of their trip resonated with their respective constituencies. Max Havelaar also uses the field trips and immersions, and emphasises the importance of a good selection and composition of the touring party. For example, one can use the occasion to bring together different companies who are part of the same production chain and have the journey trigger cooperation between them.

Next, when it comes to business, NGOs are advised to *do as they preach*: to believe that a different economic system where companies serve the interest of society at large is possible. Private sector actors speak of 'antipathy', 'deep distrust' and 'hostile' when they describe NGOs' attitude towards them. If NGOs want to convince business to change, they will have to believe it is possible too. In line with this, the best way to convince others to be self-critical and open to fundamental critique is to set the example. However, few outsiders are aware of the fact that the sound functioning of NGOs is heavily scrutinised by governments but more importantly by NGOs themselves. NGOs are increasingly self-critical of their programs, their approaches, their impact and even their reason to exist. Outsiders however tend to have the impression that NGOs are convinced of their own

message and spend tax money to spread that message and to eternalise their own existence. In reality NGOs are involved in very critical self-reflection in which they do not avoid fundamental questions, and the critiques voiced by outsiders often fade when compared to the much more fundamental discussions and experiments currently taking place in the NGO community. This shows that while NGOs don't know their target audiences very well, the contrary is true too. NGOs that do as they preach might have to communicate about it more strongly. Also, shying away from involving other unlike-minded actors, contradicts the multi-stakeholder engagement they want companies to perform.

In its DEAR, the NGO as a sector are suggested to *provide different formulas and models* that together can work as stepping stones. This means daring to go beyond the watchdog role and sponsorships, and moving towards structural cooperations that have the potential to change the DNA of business leaders as well as their companies (see Box 4). Interviewees seem to agree that all roles remain necessary: no-compromise name and shaming, sponsoring/exchange formulas that create awareness and involvement, process support in changing business to cross-sector cooperation and public-private partnerships. It remains unclear to what extent a combination of those roles in one NGO is considered opportune. What is clear is that the current supply is considered limited, one-sided and even 'dull'. If the water between NGOs and private sector is too deep, hybrid models could help to trigger interest and bridge gaps (see Box 4).

Box 4: going beyond

Private sector representatives often referred to Streetwize as `a good example'. The Mobile School vzw, boosting street kids' confidence and emancipation through mobile schools (also see Box 2) has a Siamese twin, called Streetwize. Streetwize is a company that uses Mobile School's experiences and network to offer innovative capacity building to companies. Amongst the products they offer are in-house workshops using testimonies from street kids, as well as leadership expeditions dropping business people in the urban jungle and have them tackle challenges together with street kids to sharpen their street skills. The profits of Streetwize are then reinvested in Mobile Schools. With this hybrid model the organisation aims to become self-financing. Streetwize/Mobile School throws off the bad image development actors have. Taking a business-like approach, asking market-conform prices and giving each client a personal treatment, helps them bridging the gap between development and business.

NGO representatives as well as private sector interviewees often referred to Vredeseilanden as `a good example'. By experimenting with multi-stakeholder cooperation on international production chains and by targeting private sector actors with the biggest catalysing potential, Vredeseilanden is doing pioneering work in the NGO landscape. The challenge remains to scale up this approach. At the same time, it is important to recognise that one successful cooperation with a big private player may have much more direct impact than a very successful public campaign.

Finally, NGOs should *guard against the risks of interacting with business and of cooperation in general.* Companies' motivations to engage in development vary and can be superficial as well as profound: good PR and image gains, employee satisfaction, building public support, protecting the sustainability of production, improving quality, contribution to a way of doing business, build on new standards of valorisation, personal conviction, solidarity, ... In the end, the determining factor remains self-interest. To some extent this can be sound self-interest: a company needs to secure its future, and this may include secure a sustainable production of its raw materials. But in all interviewees' opinion, business in general isn't driven by noble intention (yet), and NGOs should be aware of this too. On top of that, any multistakeholder cooperation is fraught with risks, traps and setbacks (Aarnoudse & Van Ongevalle, 2010). Different guides offer suggestions on how to set up successful partnerships (De Ekstermolengroep, 2000; van Huijstee, Ricco & Ceresna-Chaturvedi, 2012; van Huijstee, 2012).

5 | Concluding remarks

Overlooking the previous analysis of supply, demand, lacunas, explanations and suggestions some overall reflections emerge.

5.1 The value of target group specialisation is limited, and may hinder true respect for diversity

In the case of VTSE, the target group demarcation ignores important differences between VSE and TSE and might distract from differences at school, class or even student level. In the case of for-profit private sector or 'the financial and economic institutions' as it has been demarcated by the NGOs themselves, the demarcation fails to recognise the vast diversity within the target group and mercilessly shows how uncomfortable and unfamiliar NGOs are with business. Consequently the added value of target group specialisation should not be overestimated. In both cases, the secondary education and the private sector, recognition of the diversity within these groups, and building the flexibility to align DEAR to the specific context and preferences of different audiences was considered crucial. This poses some specific challenges for DEAR. A tailor-made DEAR practice may require a more actor-focused[9] planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME) approach that can help NGOs to develop objectives and actor focused theories of change (or intervention logics) that are more aligned to their specific target groups. As was also demonstrated by other PULSE research (Van Ongevalle, 2013), actor-focused PME approaches have the potential to contribute towards a more sophisticated knowledge about and understanding of the target groups but also about the changes one would hope to see within the target groups and the intervention's contribution to these changes.

5.2 Being right all the time is a problem and blocks open multi-stakeholder engagement

NGO's are perceived as complacent: they are convinced of 'being right' and 'knowing better' and this attitude risks pushing away target audiences instead of convincing them. This is true to some extent for the VTSE, were middle class NGOs risk lecturing students on the appropriate behaviour without connecting to the reality of these students, which is often very different from the reality of GSE students for which many DEAR activities were originally designed. This is even truer for the for-profit sector, were literally none of the interviewees failed to mention the paternalistic attitude some NGOs have when approaching business. Without a doubt, a long history of mutual antipathy and misunderstandings is at the base of this mismatch between NGOs and for-profit, but the failure of NGOs to let go of the moral high ground is definitely part of its persistence.

9 A key characteristic of an actor-focused PME approach is that it focuses on the specific needs, context and change of those actors whom a DEAR programme is hoping to influence directly or indirectly. Furthermore, programme staff and the actors whom the programme is trying to influence directly or indirectly are actively involved in the collection and/or use of monitoring information (Van Ongevalle, 2013).

Research suggests this is a trap DEAR quite often fails to avoid. With the acronym 'HEADS UP', de Oliviera (de Oliveira (Andreotti), 2012, p. 1-3; de Oliviera (Andreotti), 2012, p. 24-26) points at the seven common problems:

- hegemony (justifying superiority and supporting domination);
- ethnocentrism (projecting one view, one 'forward', as universal);
- ahistoricism (forgetting historical legacies and complicities);
- depoliticisation (disregarding power inequalities and ideological roots of analyses and proposals);
- salvationism (framing help as the burden of the fittest);
- un-complicated solutions (offering easy solutions that do not require systemic change);
- paternalism(seeking affirmation of superiority through the provision of help).

It would be a very interesting exercise to screen DEAR for all of them. Roads to addressing this issue will always include the search for other and also conflicting perspectives.

5.3 Lack of information hinders true understanding of the DEAR dynamics

The attempts to map, explain or remedy the mismatch between supply and demand of DEAR are hindered by a lack of information on DEAR aimed at VTSE and the private sector. By collecting different perspectives and bits and pieces of information from development NGO as well as from private sector representatives, this research succeeded in summarising some initial indications. However, for an in-depth understanding additional research is necessary, starting with a thorough mapping of the NGOs' positions and DEAR activities towards private sector, and a systematic mapping of the DEAR demand in envisaged target groups (including at the level of the end users such as entrepreneurs and teachers and students). On NGO-side improvements are possible too: a better common understanding of the used target group demarcations (*e.g.* 'economic and financial institutions') and stronger agreements for accurate reporting would be helpful to accurately track DEAR-supply.

appendix 1 **List of interviews**

Annemie Demedts (Cel Kwaliteit: Noordwerking en Methodologie), ngo-federatie, 26 June 2013
Arnoud Raskin (Owner, founder), Streetwize & Mobile School, 9 July 2013
Corina Dhaene (Founder, Consultant), Ace Europe, 2 July 2013
David Leyssens (Network Director), KAURI, 2 July 2013
Inge Overmeer (Algemeen secretaris), Ondernemers voor Ondernemers, 9 July 2013
Jan Boulogne (Directeur Vorming), Unizo, 29 July 2013
Karlien Wouters (Stakeholder and Policy Manager), Max Havelaar, 9 July 2013
Katrien de Wilde (Verantwoordelijke Ontwikkelingseducatie), Via Don Bosco, 12 July 2013
Luc Bonte (Directeur), Vredeseilanden, 4 July 2013
Magali Lucy (Responsable des thématiques qualités), ACODEV, 8 July 2013
Peter Ketelers (Coördinator onderwijs/jongeren), Broederlijk Delen, 8 July 2013
Sabine Denis (Change Executive Officer), Business & Society, 15 July 2013
Stefaan Bonte (Diensthoofd Network Development Department), Trias, 3 July 2013

Bernadette Van Hissenhoven (Documentalist Antwerpen), Kleur Bekennen, 2 July 2013
Evita DHaenens (Educatief medewerker Oost-Vlaanderen), Kleur Bekennen, 3 July 2013
Jyoti Degroote, (Pedagogisch verantwoordelijke), Kleur Bekennen, 21 June 2013
Lotte Adriaenssens (Educatief medewerker Antwerpen), Kleur Bekennen, 2 July 2013
Mieke Van Meulder (Educatief medewerker Limburg), Kleur Bekennen, 15 July 2013

appendix 2 **Results database searches**

Table 5.1 Search database Speak Out

Search criteria	GSE	TSE	VSE
Workshops	276	275	260

* Searched on 26/07/2013.
Source www.kleurbekennen.be

Table 5.2 Search on theme 'developing aid' in database Klascement

Categories/search criteria	GSE	TSE	VSE
Interactive presentation	2	3	4
Lesson preparation/plan	3	3	4
Class activity (exercise/task in class)	6	8	7
Borrowable material: Game	2	2	2
Contest	3	3	3
Event: exhibition	1	1	1
Non-profit (museum, organisation, ...)	6	6	6

* Searched on 25/11/2013.
Source www.klascement.be

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